



Article by Christian Schwarz-Schilling, High Representative for BiH: “Down-to-Earth Policies”

Today, on Europe Day, the 57th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, which launched the process that culminated in the creation of the European Union, it is worth considering how the European Union’s founders turned a grand idea into a functioning reality.

For one thing, they were intensely practical. At first, they focused on the joint production and management of coal and steel. You can’t get more down to earth than that. They had their eye on preventing another European war – but their actual policies were rooted in delivering tangible benefits as fast as possible to citizens – and in 1950 the citizens of Western Europe were desperate for improvements in living conditions that were as harsh as in Bosnia and Herzegovina today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina will be a better place (and this can happen quickly) when its politicians focus on nuts-and-bolts policies. That means rationally organized institutions, better coordinated planning and management of resources, a single economic space, improvements to the country’s business environment and serious and sustained job creation. It worked for Europe and it will work for Bosnia and Herzegovina – and it is exactly what is needed in order to turn Bosnia and Herzegovina from an aspiring EU member state into an actual one.

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